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ABSTRACT

This document profiles nine European programs that exemplify good practice in social and occupational integration of disadvantaged people. The programs profiled are as follows: (1) Restaurant Venezia (a CD-ROM program to improve the reading and writing skills of young people in Luxembourg who have learning difficulties); (2) an integrated laboratory for teaching young people in Italy to read and write; (3) European Trainers against Exclusion (a project to facilitate the labor market integration of victims of occupational and social exclusion); (4) a program that champions the cause of people with disabilities in Greece, Sweden, and the United Kingdom and tries to find solutions to their employment problems; (5) a comparison of innovative models of vocational guidance for young disadvantaged people in the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Finland; (6) KeyNet (a project to give a second chance to unemployed people in areas of high unemployment in Germany, Greece, Sweden, and the United Kingdom through development of key skills); (7) Entrance (a program to improve prisoners' social and occupational skills); (8) a program to improve the employability of prisoners in Belgium, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom; and (9) Sociodroga (a program providing continuous training to social workers and others responsible for education and training in the field of drug addiction). (MN)

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**Leonardo da Vinci**

*Series: Good Practices* 6

# Social and occupational integration
## of disadvantaged people

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The requirements of today's labour market and new sectors of activity call for constant updating of knowledge and professional skills so now, more than ever, lifelong learning is essential for everyone. The EU's Leonardo da Vinci programme, launched in 1995, has brought innovation to the field of vocational training, giving a targeted response to these new needs.

The results of the projects supported under this programme deserve to be disseminated as widely as possible among those involved in vocational training, the social partners, policy-makers and citizens generally. They should subsequently be adapted to other target groups with a view to being developed and used in other occupational sectors and environments. In this way, businesses and associations working for the benefit of citizens may improve their practices. On the policy front, project results should be reflected also in national and regional training systems.

With this in mind, the Directorate-General for Education and Culture, which manages the Leonardo da Vinci programme, has introduced a series of brochures entitled 'Leonardo da Vinci – Good practices', providing information on the programme's results. These brochures are designed to familiarise as many people as possible with examples of good practice stemming from the programme. The projects described here have been selected on the basis of their impact and originality of their results, but this selection represents only a small sample of the programme's output between 1995 and 1999.

It is with great pleasure that I present this brochure and hope that you will find it interesting.

Viviane Reding
Member of the European Commission
with responsibility for education and culture

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# SOCIAL AND OCCUPATIONAL INTEGRATION OF DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE

Improving and adapting the general level of education and training in Europe, in line with the demands of the labour market, is one of the main objectives of Community vocational training policy.

In striving to equip the available manpower with the skills required by employers, the Commission gives priority to improving employability, with particular emphasis on the more vulnerable groups. While improvement in the quality of education generally is to be welcomed, the benefits of this are unfortunately lost on those deemed to be at risk, especially young people who have left the education system prematurely and workers who do not have the necessary qualifications to move into or reintegrate in the labour market or to maintain their place in it.

Risk groups may be defined as people who are more specifically disadvantaged because of certain social or individual handicaps. These people must make an additional effort, not just on the job front, but also socially and psychologically, to give themselves a chance of competing with those more fortunate than themselves, and thus to boost their chances of getting a job and living harmoniously in society.

Vocational training policy therefore has a very important role to play in the socio-occupational development of the less well-off, aiming to help them find their way to a better life.

On the whole, the Leonardo da Vinci projects are experimental actions carried out by groups of experts and professionals seeking to respond to clearly defined needs in their areas of specialisation.

The products described in this brochure are held to constitute good practice in that they have helped to improve the quality of vocational training and raise the skill levels of disadvantaged people in a wide variety of sectors. They deal with the social and occupational integration of ex-prisoners, specialised training for people suffering from physical disabilities, and the offer of a second chance at training for young people and adults who have received inadequate schooling. They also propose solutions to the problems of unemployed people and others pushed to the margins of society by drugs and suchlike.

Many of these Leonardo da Vinci products are still being perfected with a view to making the greatest possible contribution to the process of integrating disadvantaged people in Europe.

More information about the Leonardo da Vinci programme and the electronic version of this brochure can be found at:
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/leonardo/leonardo2_en.html

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# **DELTA** (Restaurant Venezia)

**The 'Restaurant Venezia' CD-ROM has been a great success in technical schools, helping young people with learning difficulties to read and write better in their first language (Luxembourg, 1997)**

The project, developed by Luxembourgish, French and German partners, was designed to help young people and adults with learning difficulties to overcome a lack of rudimentary knowledge of their mother tongue or to help them understand the language of the country in which they live. As a user-friendly interactive learning tool, it offers multiple opportunities for use in schools and evening classes for young people and/or adults, on an individual or group basis.

The CD-ROM was devised by a team of teachers, trainers, psychologists, social workers and educational software designers working closely with potential users testing the product throughout its development. It simulates a get-together of a dozen or so young people in a restaurant where, on the basis of writing, reading and oral expression exercises built into the scenario, the pupils can improve their knowledge of their first language or the language of the country in which they live. For example, after having decided on the menu for the group, the participant is required to read it, order it in writing and calculate the cost. Those involved will also be encouraged to give their opinion on social issues, such as parental authority and solidarity among young people. In all, 70 exercises are offered with three levels of difficulty. The CD-ROM can be used for training individually, semi-autonomously or in a group. An assessment of performance is available if the pupil wants one.

In total, 2 000 copies of the CD-ROM have been produced (1 000 in French and 1 000 in German) and distributed to schools and adult education organisations.

The Luxembourg media (press, radio, television) have disseminated the results of this project widely. Training sessions for trainers continue to be organised regularly in the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg. The CD-ROM is expected to be marketed at the end of 2002.

In view of the product's success, the partners are now working on the development of the DELTA project and the creation of three new language versions (English, Letzeburgish and Portuguese) of the 'Restaurant Venezia' CD-ROM.

A third product in the pipeline will focus on the elementary education of children with learning difficulties.

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# Integrated laboratory for teaching young people to read and write

**Use of the CD-ROM as the preferred teaching tool in basic literacy courses, particularly in the school environment, for young illiterate adults (Italy, 1995)**

Italian, English and Greek partners initially devised a method and electronic material for learning a first language through flexible semi-autonomous training. They then set about applying this new training method in practice, devising a plan for workplace reintegration and equipping vocational training schools with the facilities for accommodating young illiterate adults.

The basic product is a CD-ROM which, with the accompanying handbook and user guide, is available in English, Greek and Italian. There is also a guide aimed specifically at teachers. Some 500 copies have been distributed to training centres, schools and local authorities in Italy, while 200 CD-ROMs have been distributed in Greece and 90 in the United Kingdom.

After evaluating the product, a group of 50 or so teaching experts set about disseminating the product. It was presented at the following events:

- national seminars in Greece and Italy (1999) and the Leonardo da Vinci Product Fair (Italy, 1999);
- seminar on developing self-confidence and entrepreneurship (Iceland, 1999).

Within its specific target area, the product is used in Italy in programmes for the training of illiterate young people by the Piedmont Employment Agency, the City of Turin and the Primary Schools Training Centre (IRRSAE), involving programmes of 150 hours and vocational preparation courses. More than 2 000 young people have benefited from it in the first two years of its use. In Greece, the product is used by the City of Athens and, in the United Kingdom, by the City of Bradford.

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# ETAE (European Trainers Against Exclusion)

**European Trainers Against Exclusion (France, 1997)**

This project, run by 'Cépière Formation' in Toulouse, with assistance from English and Greek partners, aims to facilitate integration into the labour market for victims of occupational and social exclusion: the long-term unemployed, migrants, women re-entering the labour market and people with disabilities.

It proposes innovative solutions focusing both on the development of trainers' skills and on the design of tools for open and distance learning.

The following activities have been developed through the project:

- thematic training of trainers in various modules: the training needs of trainers, educational methods and new technologies, open and distance training courses;
- organisation of seminars on different topics: structures of centres for open distance learning, development of methodology for contacting an employer.

The new programme for trainers is used for group training, within the framework of regional training plans and within networks of training centres such as the 'Maisons familiales rurales'.

It is also used on an individual basis. Freely available on the Internet, it can be consulted by all trainers wishing to undergo this form of open training and online learning. They may also, on request, be given support and assistance for their training.

Furthermore, ETAE training modules have been translated into Russian and incorporated into a LIEN-TACIS project setting up a resource centre for training people with disabilities in Novosibirsk.

A second Leonardo da Vinci project, focusing on the main ETAE training modules, was presented in 2001: the 'Net trainers' project proposes the setting-up of a European training platform for trainers in three languages (English, French and German) with online European certification for trainers.

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# Employability of people with disabilities

**People with disabilities find it more difficult than their non-disabled peers to get a job. Coventry University's Centre for Research champions the cause of people with disabilities and tries to find solutions (United Kingdom, 1996)**

A research team made up of employers, training providers, experts and people with disabilities from three countries (Greece, Sweden, United Kingdom) has looked more closely at occupations which are likely to make the most of disabled people's skills and offer them employment, placing particular emphasis on the communication sector.

The project has given rise to a training programme designed to help people with disabilities improve their occupational skills and be more aware of their employment opportunities. The programme is divided into modules: career management and application of skills, employment in the communication sector, and European legislation.

An Internet site has been created for the benefit of people with disabilities (young people with autism, deaf people, the mentally handicapped), professionals working with them, potential employers and the general public. It may also be useful for any person experiencing some form of difficulty and looking for a job (see the web site address below).

The Internet site, freely accessible, was initially translated from English into Greek and Swedish. Two further sites have been added, in conjunction with a second project, for Bulgaria and Cyprus. Each site is adapted to the specific needs of the countries concerned.

The results of the project and demonstration of the Internet site were presented by the three participating countries at a major international conference (London, 1999). Conferences in other countries have followed. The web site is regularly consulted by organisations and professionals dealing with disabled people.

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# Vocational guidance for young disadvantaged people

**A comparison of innovative models in Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Finland (Germany, 1996)**

The partners first of all analysed the problems encountered when attempting to match labour supply and demand. They found that most of the problems related to young people who had not successfully completed their schooling.

The aim of this project is to find the best method of getting employment for young people who, after failing to complete their schooling, find themselves disadvantaged in obtaining their first job, despite their desire to enter the labour market.

After analysing their national systems for the vocational guidance of young people without qualifications, the partners considered the following three questions: What does the labour market have to offer for this category of young people? How can their skills be evaluated? What is the most appropriate training system for them?

The partners concluded that it was necessary to create new networks to facilitate the communication of information and to investigate more effectively the measures most likely to succeed. They put forward recommendations addressed to policy-makers and training providers at European, national and regional level, and passed on information to ministries, placement offices and research establishments.

The partners disseminated the results of their study through networks at national and regional level, and a wider audience was reached through the press, seminars and national conferences. They also distributed a thousand copies of an English-language handbook (170 pages).

As a result of this project, several new networks have been formed to facilitate and speed up the transfer of knowledge:

- A new system of regional-level networks has been organised in Germany, dealing with vocational guidance, skills and specific problems of young people, together with new opportunities for employment. In addition, the methods developed in the original project have been effectively utilised by the project leader, the Deutsches Jugendinstitut e.V. (German Institute for Youth), helping to promote innovation.
- Finland has organised a new system of networks at national level.
- Germany and the United Kingdom are engaged in ongoing exchanges of experience, but not through a system of networks.

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# KeyNet

**... or how to give a second chance to unemployed people, in areas of high unemployment, through the development of key skills (Sweden, 1998)**

This project, carried out in Germany, Greece, Sweden and the United Kingdom, was designed to support local employment agencies in their efforts to help integrate groups of young people (16–25 years old) and unemployed adults (aged 40 and over) into the labour market.

After analysing the situation described in the 'Research reports on the territorial employment pacts' for the regions concerned, the partners devised a common definition of six key skills facilitating access to the labour market: communication (taking part in discussions, producing written material); information technologies (presenting and evaluating information, using technology); working with others (identifying collective goals and ways of achieving them); improving own learning and performance (assessing own strengths and weaknesses, identifying objectives and planning to meet them); using mathematical skills at the workplace; problem solving (using different approaches).

A programme has been developed for trainers and trainees, including the following items:

- A 'trainer's guide' helping trainers to implement key skills training programmes. It asks questions to encourage trainers to think about why they are using a particular training method and what could be improved to encourage trainees to learn more effectively.
- An 'assessment guide' providing more information and guidance on how to use assessment more effectively, giving examples of assessment exercises.
- A 'best practice guide' describing the application of the new programme, such as the training of unemployed people in schools/colleges in the United Kingdom or the training of young people in organisations in Sweden with a view to determining their ability and interest for working in industry.
- A 'trainee's folder' summarising what the acquisition of key skills could do for trainees.

Documentation and additional information can be found in the 'electronic resource centre' accessible via the Internet (www.keyskills.org) with versions adapted to each country.

Eight thousand copies of a brochure in English, German, Greek and Swedish have been distributed, and national workshops have been organised. Conferences and meetings have presented the product. The web site also constitutes an excellent dissemination tool.

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# Entrance

**Improving the socio-occupational skills of prisoners (Netherlands, 1995)**

People coming out of prison have to be able to reintegrate into society and the world of work, and they need to be helped to achieve this; juvenile delinquents encounter the same problems. This project entails interactive training teaching them to analyse by themselves their socio-occupational skills and aptitudes. It also encourages them to make use of and improve their skills, thereby facilitating their integration.

The advantage of this project lies in providing an original assessment methodology, with the first concern being to boost the individuals' interest and motivation, and to make them aware of the potential which they possess within themselves. In a very specific way, the method makes it possible to explore all the areas in which prisoners (and juvenile delinquents) may encounter problems and need assistance when they want to reintegrate into society or find a job.

The learning tool is a CD-ROM entitled 'Walk of life'. In an interactive role-play exercise, the participant is immersed in specific situations where choices must be made. Responses must be given to questions designed to highlight individual knowledge and skills, social background, psychological state, aspirations and plans. The responses will allow the participants to go through different stages of the walk. The purpose of the game is to stay as long as possible in the virtual city which is an imaginary city.

Professionals in the prison sector (counsellors, experts, social workers) are helped in their work by this new tool (CD-ROM), which is accompanied by a handbook aimed at them and which they may make available to prisoners.

The dissemination of results is organised by the National Agency for Penal Institutes in the Netherlands, the DJI (Dienst Justitiële Jeugdinrichtingen) and by other organisations in the partner countries (Germany, Greece, Finland and the United Kingdom). Conferences have been organised and newsletters distributed.

In the Netherlands, a thousand or so CD-ROMs and handbooks translated into Dutch have been distributed free of charge, within the DJI circuit, from June 2002 onwards. They are used in conjunction with vocational integration programmes.

These quality products also serve as models for other training projects, particularly in the United Kingdom (Warrington).

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# Education and training in prisons

**Having identified sectors with a labour shortage, partners from three European countries are developing training programmes for prisoners (United Kingdom, 1996)**

The employability of prisoners is a problem for several countries, including Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, which are involved in this project.

The partners' initial analysis of the existing situation took stock of individual experience and know-how. They all arrived at the same conclusion, i.e. that lack of self-confidence was one of the main reasons for prisoners failing to find work.

However, they had different ideas about the jobs and corresponding training that could be given to prisoners, and a range of good practices in relation to vocational training in prisons has been highlighted.

For instance, the UK partner focused on the training of young offenders aged 15 and upwards, most of whom come from regions hit badly by unemployment. The aim is to teach them to communicate in preparation for customer service and call centre jobs, with training covering a one-week period.

Belgium chose to provide training for prisoners in the information technologies, with emphasis also on the communication aspect. In the Netherlands, training is offered in the building trade, more specifically on measures to deal with asbestos. Both countries have prioritised the training of young male adults over a period of six weeks.

The project results have been disseminated among justice ministries, prisons, educationalists and prisoners' associations. More than 500 copies of the list of good practices for vocational training in prisons and the handbook have been distributed in the partner countries, in Dutch and English.

In the Netherlands, a demonstration CD-ROM on anti-asbestos work has been compiled on the basis of the conclusions drawn in that country.

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# Socidroga

**Following on from the Infodrogas project, Socidroga is concerned with the continuous training of social workers and other professionals responsible for education and training in the field of drug addiction (Spain, 1998)**

This project enables a wide variety of people working in the field, and who are in daily contact with persons experiencing difficulties, to benefit from an interactive self-training tool.

Socidroga provides clearly targeted responses to prevention, treatment and other strategies for combating drugs and social exclusion.

The partnership, after devising and testing the products, conducted a pilot experiment with six institutions, leading to the following results:

- an academic certification framework administered by Socidroga;
- a European and worldwide database of information aimed at social workers in the drug-addiction field;
- description of specific new occupational profiles in this field in Spain, Italy and Portugal;
- creation of a training programme divided into various modules: exclusion and social integration, substances, demand and consumption, availability, prevention, treatment, regulation and social control, intervention strategies.

The CD-ROM-format for open and distance training has been translated into English, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. Several professional and education associations involved in the project intend to incorporate this product into their teaching programmes for specialisation and continuous training in the drug-addiction field. In addition, Socidroga, like Infodrogas, benefits from wide dissemination through the Anti-Drug Foundation (FAD) in universities and vocational training institutes in Spain and Latin America.

Given the success of its product, the FAD has decided to market the CD-ROM for the general public (in English, Spanish and other language versions) and to provide access, subject to payment, on the Internet.

The FAD, as promoter of the two projects Infodrogas and Socidroga, is continuing its social action to provide information and training in Spain and Latin America, using tools created in the framework of these Leonardo da Vinci projects.

The FAD is financing a third project which will be completed in 2002, aimed at devising a training programme for doctors who are frequently confronted with drug problems among their patients.

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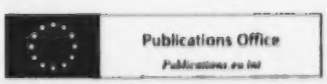

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